

Dvd 05 - Gethsemane

by Art Katz

Art Katz explores the profound significance of Jesus' agony in Gethsemane as a precursor to understanding the cross and the nature of suffering in the Christian life.

Duration: 1:17:47

Scripture: Matthew 26:36

Topics: "Spiritual Transformation", "The Cross"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of embracing the suffering and moral struggles that Jesus faced in the garden of Gethsemane, highlighting the need for believers to willingly undergo deep spiritual transformation and alignment with God's nature. It calls for a profound surrender to God's will, a willingness to contend against the seductive distractions of the world, and a readiness to bear the cross in all aspects of life, including relationships, culture, and ministry.

Transcript

Jesus. Above God. And we see the beauty of their lives, and their character, and their integrity.

And we hear them speak their many languages, and see their intensity, and their passion, and their character, and their nature. And our hearts call upon them for the kingdom of God, that they might be an end-time people of God, proclaiming His salvation throughout the earth. I wish you would listen.

I wish you would listen to our wishes through the church. In three or four days away from New York, I've already had 30 hours in the air, and four flights. Only 13 more to go in the seven weeks that remain in New Zealand, Australia, Kenya, Uganda, Cameroon, Burkina Faso.

Every place laden with great portent and significance, as if it is once and for all, including tonight. You mustn't dismiss that as some romantic propensity on my part that wants to give to any occasion heightened meaning. But the heck of the matter is, every occasion is heightened.

Do you realize that? Young as you are, every occasion is a once and for all. And when the invitation came from Australia, that has initiated these days, the brother said, this is your last visit, Art. I don't know where he got that, but I seem to agree.

I think I'm going to go on until I'll be 120. So it may not be the termination of the bodily life, but it may well be the Lord opening a whole new area of involvement, maybe mainland China, Asia, that will not permit

the luxury of return to places where I've been privileged to come before. So share my mentality, which will make you more than a passive audience tonight, that this is a once and for all occasion that shall not be given again.

What then does one speak in it? As privileged as I am with revelation and insight and perspectives that are altogether utterly rare, so many times men say to me, who else sees it the way you do, Art? Who else is saying it this way? And I scratch my head and I say, I don't know of anyone. It may well be that they exist, but they will not be many, and they will not be well known. They'll be as obscure and as hidden and as unobtrusive as I myself am.

So I know that I enjoy a rare perspective, and really, by every reckoning, I should be employing every opportunity to express it. The mystery of Israel and the church, central to the church's own consideration in the last days. To omit that is to defraud yourself of the reality of your own calling.

And yet, it's not my subject tonight. My subject tonight is Gethsemane, Jesus agonizing in the garden, which the Lord stirred for me in Singapore, and seems again to be the foremost burden of my heart. So isn't it remarkable? As great as is the weight of every occasion, once and for all, for time and for eternity, the Lord allows you to proceed on nothing more but the faintest intimation of his will.

So you're being treated already to the prophetic phenomenon that is so quiet, although when I first spoke in Singapore, it was a dread. I never came to a pulpit with a greater sense of dread and reluctance as I came there. Why? I don't know.

Maybe it was the sounding of a whole theme of perspective that began with Gethsemane. Maybe because I sensed all that was at stake, cherished relationship that came as a result of my last visit to that great city with a prominent congregation that I didn't want to see jeopardized by any failure to be to them what they could have expected on the basis of the last visit. Every new visit is a risk of loss.

Do you realize that? There can be a life and building and relationship, and one mishap, one wrong word, one wrong accent, one unbecoming thing is enough to sunder that relationship and spoil it. So maybe that's why I came with such trepidation to the platform, to the pulpit, to take that risk. The Lord honored it.

He came through. The fact of the matter is, after 41 years in the faith, I can't think of a time when he's not come through. He's remarkably faithful, not because he's under obligation to a character like me, but because he can't help himself.

That's what he is. He's in himself faithful. That's why I said, it'll be blessed tomorrow.

All these days in New Zealand and Australia and Africa will be blessed. So Lord, I'm really boasting on you. I hope these people understand.

And thank you, Lord, for coming again to this land and being reminded of its sweetness, the physical delight, the green, my God, that meets the eye, the beauty of this island, this place. And it's dear, Lord, you made it. You're the very soul of geography itself.

The earth is the Lord's. And it's fashioned in your great wisdom for purposes yet more fully to be revealed. And may something of those purposes be expressed in these days.

So Lord, we're going for broke again. And if I'm in error, I don't think so, of this disposition to think that you in the garden agonizing is something you want sounded to the church, that there's a preliminary for us before our own crucifixion that needs to begin in the garden, which garden New Zealand itself is, then instruct us. Because everything that you did is not mere episode.

It is eschatological design and pattern. It's to instruct us upon whom the ends of the age have come. Everything is fraught with instruction and the things that you both spoke and did with an eye to the consequence of for us in the last days.

So speak, Lord. Thank you. Open our inner ear.

Open my mouth. Be blessed by this precious time and opportunity in this land. And avail yourself of the occasion as if, in fact, it's a last.

We thank you and give you praise. In Jesus' name and God's people said, amen. Well, you can turn with me to Matthew 26.

Always admiring how terse the scriptures are. T-E-R-S-E. The Singaporeans were wise enough to have behind me a screen, and when some obscure word issued from me, instantly it was flashed on the screen with the definition.

Because I told these Chinese they have only a functional English. I used the word pusillanimous, taking it for granted that everyone knows what that word means. And the first word they flashed was pusillanimous.

You understand what terse means? T-E-R-S-E. Compact. Few words.

And they crucified him. I'm so appreciative of the Lord, all the more after Mel Gibson and his passion, because that was so profuse, so schmaltzy, so overdone, so bringing out the last drop of emotional sympathy in a Catholic way that makes Jesus an object of pity and could therefore excite by that same inducement to look upon Jews as Christ killer, which in fact they are. But not to be told that, as they have historically heard it throughout their European existence as the statement that preceded another onslaught of pillage, rape, looting, murder, death.

They need to be told one day by an Elijah people who can speak the truth in an appropriate compassion that yes, alack and alas, not just your fathers, but you yourself are guilty of his death. And in fact, your involvement and arrangement and participation was necessary. He made himself your victim because he knew your frame.

As Jews, you have no sense of sin. You're the utter humanist. You think that total depravity of man is a Christian concept.

You're immune to understanding yourself as sinners. For you, if you sin, it's an error. A boo-boo, a fault.

You made a mistake. I wish I could show you my clippings on my floor there in my Brooklyn apartment from the New York Times, which I receive daily. There's not an issue that I'm not scissoring out some article on collapsed CEOs, executives who have taken for themselves \$145 million in retirement bonus and various other ways of greed in remarkable frequency every day.

There's another, what's the word? Scandal. But the men themselves who perpetrate these scandals are not embarrassed. And when they're caught, then they have to pay a penalty of so many millions.

What is that after they have profited by the billions by their skullduggery? And with the agreement that, yes, they'll pay the penalty, but they will neither acknowledge nor deny the offense. Who has an understanding of sin, even in the church? And if we have not an appropriate understanding of sin, how shall we understand appropriately atonement? How shall we understand the cross? How shall we understand the necessary death? How shall we esteem the blood if we do not adequately understand what Jesus came to attend that was chronic, that afflicted a whole mankind, and for which there was no remedy short of his sufferings unto death? It's for the want of these elementary considerations that the cross is now the customary piece of jewelry hanging on Madonna's breast, to draw your attention not to the cross, but to her cleavage. But of course, it's laden with diamonds.

And now she's becoming very spiritual and is studying Kabbalah. You know what Kabbalah is? That's Jewish, Judaic mysticism. It's remarkable that they cannot find any answer in Christ, but they can find it in esoteric, excuse my language, Judaism.

A number of movie stars have embraced Kabbalah, and it's out of the pit. Wearing their crosses, as do our American athletes, mostly black, and they can well afford the most ornate cross, together with their earrings, because they're making robber baron fortunes that run to millions per year. Contracts like \$25, \$30, \$50 million.

Some kid out of high school gets \$7 million just for signing. Hey, where can there be sanity in a world that gives that kind of compensation to men who play with balls? So the church, the cross has suffered loss. It has become a superficial, external piece of jewelry or something for the architecture, but we need to apprehend it afresh.

And for some reason, good reason, the issue of the cross does not begin at Calvary. It begins at Gethsemane. The fact of the matter is, I even said to the Singaporean Chinese, it begins in heaven.

Jesus coming down from heaven, where he had abided with the Father since his inception, in a prized and cherished relationship in the ethereal, holy, sinless realm that heaven is, when he agreed voluntarily to leave it in order to come down and take upon himself the form of man and Jewish man, and also that of a slave unto death, that decision made in heaven, even from the foundations before the foundations of the earth were laid, because it was the lamb slain before the foundations of the earth. That decision, that willingness, was already the cross. And it was even the cross before the decision.

It was always the nature of God. The cross is not an event of 2,000 years ago. That was its conspicuous manifestation.

The cross is intrinsic to God himself as God. It's his self-giving nature in love that opens him to suffering for others. That's a pitifully inadequate statement.

So we need to know the cross is not a Johnny-come-lately final thing. It ever and always was, and even presently is, the essential nature of God as God. Can you say amen to that? Now I got you.

Because if you can say amen to that for God, what must you say for yourself? If that's the intrinsic nature of God, what ought to be the intrinsic nature of his church, which is his body? And if you read Oswald Chambers today, or was it Spurgeon, both are in my devotional readings. Are they in yours? I don't even have devotional readings. Shame on you.

You dare commence the day without a time of devotion before the Lord, in word and in prayer, and in the legacy that is given us by these brilliant, saintly English writers? They're all English. I don't know what it is about Great Britain when it was great, before the advent of punk rock culture and the Beatles, whom I've never heard once, but to read Spurgeon morning and evening. I think it's today's selection where he talks about when the cross was set into its socket, there was a shudder of a convulsive kind that registered throughout the whole of creation and maybe precipitated that earthquake.

That I understood, and I'm intuitive and have long understood. But what he said is every bone in his body was jarred by that painful weight. The weight of his own body on the cross nailed, that when that thing came into its socket, when it was raised up and went into its hole in the ground, the shock of that was felt in every joint.

So much so that the scriptures can say that every bone of him was, so to speak, broken. He was set out of joint by that enormous jolt. And then he raises this question, what then ought to be experienced by those who composed that body? This will save you from New Zealand shallowness.

And something has got to come to that end. That only Spurgeon can see that his body was so affected by that jolt of being set into that socket, ought not that to be in some measure the experience of all that comprises his body? Like us? Have you ever felt the jolt? There's a basic thud, a shudder, a... I don't have a word for it, and if I don't have a word for it, it's something deep, that he necessarily had to experience in his body. What is the corollary, spiritually speaking, of that physical thing for us? Can we really be the body and have no sense of the anguish, which he experienced in that terrible jolt, together with the whole thing that made up the horror of his crucifixion? It's for the want of that, that the cross has lost its significance, and that we are essentially shallow, because this is God's great provision, not only for sin, but for self.

We've got to get this into our grip, and into our gut. Something needs to save us from New Zealand, if you understand me, or Australia, and more so Singapore, every place in the earth that is externally pleasant, and seductive, and parades as reality. We need to experience something that goes back to the beginning, and it ought to resonate in our essential personality always.

That's why my kinsmen are going to catch it. That's why they're going to tread a road to Calvary. That's why there's going to be a universal suffering for my Jewish people, an uprooting, and a casting out in nations, where they'll have no beauty that any should desire them.

They're going to be whipped to a pulp, and beaten, and flee, and most of them will not survive that final time of Jacob's trouble. But the remnant that does, and finally returns to Zion as the redeemed of the Lord, whose mourning and sighing flees away, will never ever be totally healed of the remarkable last day's suffering that marks their return to God through walking a road to Calvary comparable to His. As a priestly nation now come into its call, because the gifts and callings of God are irrevocable, the very foundation of their priestliness will be their last day's suffering.

There's something about suffering that leaves its mark upon the soul. Even after the body has been healed physically, having passed through something of an excruciating kind sets up a tremor, a resonance, that is good for us. It will be good for my people.

I want to say this. If they don't experience that, they're disqualified to be a nation of priests. They'll not be a light to New Zealand, where heaven knows that light is needed.

They can only bring it in a demeanor and a posture and an attitude of soul that was conditioned profoundly by their last day's suffering. And we also are called a nation of priests and a royal priesthood, but if you don't have a quotient and dimension of sorrow and suffering, if you have not felt that convulsive shock when that thing was set in its socket, how then can you be priestly? If you're the body, there's some kind of mystic union with the head that enables you in the realm of spirit to pick up the vibrato and shock that came when that thing was set into the hole in the earth that should affect you permanently. I've never talked like this before, first time.

Don't feel obliged to understand me. Okay, so before the cross comes the garden, which in fact is the cross, before the actuality of the cross. So in verse 36 of chapter 26, then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane and said unto the disciples, Sit ye here while I go and pray yonder.

He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then he said unto them, My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death. Carry you here and watch with me.

So what do you think, you dear New Zealander saints? Was that his Jewish national personality being expressed? A kind of Shakespearean morbid sense of sorrow that need not afflict you because you're Anglo-Saxon in your origins? Or is this appropriate for Christ? Sorrow, grief, burden that lies too deep for words. It's not a man sorrowing for himself that he's about to face an ordeal of an ultimate kind physically and morally. It's deeper than that.

It's something of what is coming to pass in a moment of time, a head-on collision that is as ancient as creation, a showdown with the powers of darkness and a final contest of an irrevocable and ultimate kind that makes his own soul to shudder. So this sorrowing and grief is not some kind of manic depressive of the Jewish personality, although we Jews are famous for it, for the wrong reasons. This is the Lord.

This is appropriate. This is real. There should be a component in our own souls for sorrow.

There should be a place for grief. There should be something of the eternal note of sadness that enters in even in the midst of our celebrations. I'm that fool who called the charismatic worship team to shut up and stop when they were doing their thing in the Israeli manner.

I said you have no right to carry on like that. As if Israel has already passed through the travail of the last days and you're anticipating her joy, then is your celebration appropriate. But if you have not factored in the suffering that is yet to come, your present celebration now is vulgar, bizarre, and obscene.

Stop it. Jesus was a man of sorrows, not just in the moment when he's facing the prospect of his cross. There was always that underside, and I'll tell you what, he's the patterned son.

If it was appropriate for him, it's appropriate for us. And I'm not asking you to cultivate some morbid kind of thing until you get into that mood. I'm asking you to come into the reality of Christ, into the essential personality of the Son of the living God who reflects the Father.

So the Father must equally then be a sorrowing deity. Or have you nothing to sorrow about? You got it all together? Society is on an upturn? Prosperity in view? All problems solved? Everything hulky-dory? No reason for sorrow? No broken lives? No kids freaking out? No unhappy marriages? We have every reason to anguish for the conditions that prevail in the earth today and not allow ourselves to be distracted or seduced by what seems to visibly be a much better appearance of things. So it's interesting.

The groaning of Jesus in the garden, the things that he was contending for, were ultimate, and that the word agony itself, I looked it up in the dictionary, and I was surprised to find it means to contend, to contest against something. There was a struggle of the deepest kind in his soul. He was contending against evil, against death, but he was equally contending against the garden itself.

Where did you get that, Cass? I don't know. I was driving to that meeting in Singapore and passing through that idyllic civilization. If ever I retire, that's the place where I'd like to be.

This is like a veritable garden, and I'm going to call the church there to agonize with Christ. They need to agonize and contend against the garden itself. Though it comes of God, though it's nature, though it's prolific, there's a beauty, but it's a beauty that can seduce us, and the spirit and powers of this world want us to believe that that external and visible thing constitutes reality itself.

But the Lord, who is grieving and sorrowing, saw through those appearances, and he knew what ultimate issues were and what was at stake, and he had to wrestle, so to speak, against the seductive power of the garden. Singapore is a garden, and to a great extent, I think the whole of New Zealand is. Isn't that a remarkable thing? I'm a nature lover.

Love your scenery, love the climate, love all that constitutes your remarkable environment, and yet I recognize prophetically that that very thing, even given of God, can be a seductive distraction from ultimate and utter reality, because if we're not tuned into reality, how then are we the church? And when we're tuned into reality of things as they are and need to be seen through that which constitutes appearances, vying for us to recognize that as being real, then we will suffer. I'm speaking like the fool tonight. You'll never again have to hear something like this, but you need to hear it once, and that one time has come to save you from being New Zealanders and to make you to be pilgrims, strangers, and sojourners in the earth.

Don't get too comfy here. Don't get too habituated. See through and what constitutes the real issues of life for which you were born both physically and again in the spirit.

There are things yet to be contended. There's a contest yet going on that's not finished. Yes, Jesus stripped them at the cross and made of them an open spoil and stripped them of their power, there's another word like militancy of their arms, but he didn't abolish them.

The final stroke that will do them in once and for all and liberate the mankind who still is under their bondage must take place through the church in a contest where an agony is required in the garden of New Zealand, and you'll be looked upon as being freaky, especially if you're young. And I said to the Chinese pastor there, who's an extraordinary man, your mandate is to commend an alternative reality to that which your congregation knows, and should you succeed despite every obstruction, everything will be pitted against that success because the powers of darkness want even to persuade the church that this outward visible and external garden constitutes the reality to which men should aspire and give their life and energy, as if this is the whole issue and that there's nothing beyond that physical life called eternity. If you shall succeed in disabusing that garden for them and giving them an alternative by the word and spirit, you will have rendered them pilgrims, strangers, and sojourners in the earth.

You will have unfitted them for success in Singapore. That's true here also. So he went to little father, although he was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death, tarry here and watch with me.

He went, father fell on his face and prayed, saying, oh my father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt. In one of the other gospel accounts, it says he sweated drops of blood. Some renditions say clots of blood.

You know what I think about that? That is the blood of atonement. It did not have to wait to be extracted by the brutality of man. The first expression of the blood of Christ, given for the propitiation of our sins, was not extracted, but given.

It was extruded. Excuse my language. It'll soon be over, sis, hang on.

Something came out of his gut. Something came out of the agony of wrestling and of contending that broke through the pores of his skin and fell as great clots of blood on the earth. And I don't know why it is, but I'm rejoicing that the first blood of Jesus did not wait to be extracted by the torture of men, but was voluntarily expressed and extruded through his own willing, voluntary suffering in prayer as he contended against the evil he was soon to face head on at the cross.

Maybe Paul knows when he said, have you wrestled against sin unto blood? Something like that. Who of us have wrestled against sin unto blood? It's descriptive. I think it's literal.

But most of our lives are lived at the surface. It's shallow. We've not come to that deep unto deep of agonizing, gasping, feeling a sense of dread as we prophetic preachers do every time we're required to stand up and speak in his name.

And if the church is called to be prophetic, it should not be our unique experience alone. You should know the dread of having to open your mouth and speak for God, from God, in a once and for all way for which you'll be held accountable. We're in a contest, you guys.

There's a struggle that's still going on and will be consummated with this age. But don't think it's going to end with a whimper. It's going to be a head on final collision because those powers of the air are deceived.

They are the very soul of deception. That's why had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory. But now, even having learned their mistake, they still think that they can triumph over him and over the church, which is his body.

Oswald Chambers got me started on this in a selection from my utmost for his highest, you can look it up in your own edition, on April 5th, in which his title is His Agony and Our Fellowship. That's why I looked up the word agony. His blood falling as clots on the ground was a statement of the internal agony in his soul over which he was wrestling and contending, not out of a fear for his mortality or for his human body and what the physical dimension of his suffering would be.

To believe that that was what Jesus was crying about, let this cup pass from me, is to miss it entirely. It's to project upon him your own cowardice. He wasn't talking about spare me this pain physically.

He was talking about not having to become sin and have the face of the father turned away who could not look upon him and have to cry out, my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? He who knew the unspeakable delight of an eternal pre-incarnate fellowship with the father knew that in having to become sin the father would have to turn away his face and at the crucial time in his suffering when his soul cries out more than ever for the sense of the solace and comfort of a father who is physically sensed and present, at that very moment he has got to experience the reality of God-forsakenness. And if you'll

believe it and follow in the way, that's your experience also. That's why I reprimanded those hotshots at that prophetic conference in America years ago who came to teach us how to invoke the presence of God through choruses as if he's a jack, Johnny on the spot, and we can manipulate him by something we perform musically to bring his presence down.

My God, what a statement of where we are in unreality if we believe that. What kind of notion of God can you have if you believe that you can manipulate him through your amplifiers and compel him to come down? And if you're getting some sense of presence, you need to question whose it is, because your condition is so abysmal and so carnal, it would be nothing for the powers of the air to give you an answer that solaces your carnal heart in which you think that that's God. So I called the hall to that proceeding, and I said, you guys teaching us how we can invoke the presence, you would do better to teach us how to be faithful and obedient unto death in the absence of the felt presence of God.

That's what Jesus had to bear, and that's what we will have to bear. He's the patterned son. Everything that we read in the garden at the cross, his cry in Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, in some measure Israel will be required to pass through it, in some measure so also will we.

Some of us are experiencing that measure already and can't understand why in the crisis of our personal situation, God is not to be felt as present. That would be for us such a solace and comfort that we might bear it. Why does he withhold himself? Because of his remarkable love that has as its intention something more than your momentary comfort but your ultimate sonship and maturity.

Got the picture? The blood of Jesus was not extracted at the first but extruded, drawn out by his own agony of contending and prayer in depths of a kind that few of us have ever begun to approach. Why should we? What issue is there that is so demanding that we have to groan and pray unto blood? After all, the issue for us is an enjoyable service. Nice meeting.

Good program. New Zealand is too much with you. If that's what you think this thing is about, wrestle against this garden.

It wants to subdue you and capture you and make you to believe that it constitutes the reality that you can play a religious accompaniment to that that fits it. We need to agonize against the garden itself. I'm not calling you to disloyalty.

In fact, you'll be doing New Zealand a greater service to see through the appearance of external things than to submit to it. Jesus was contending. He was competing for something ultimate and if we have lost that sense or have never known it, how are we? That's why a man like me thinks every speaking is the last time.

Every occasion is a once and for all. We're in an ultimate contest and this arrangement tonight is not makeshift. Even my coming here.

It's all to do with the ordination of God, with his sovereignty, with moving toward a great consummation and climax of the age for which every speaking and every convocation of saints is a step toward that end. We've got to consider the end or our present is bankrupt. We've got to know we're in a contest and a struggle and one that we cannot bear alone because even his disciples slept.

They could not watch for an hour and that's where most of us are. So I couldn't do more for the Church of Jesus Christ in New Zealand than to awaken it to its apostolic and prophetic core to the ultimacy of the

faith at the end of the age in which the great issues are going to be propounded in the nations and need to be anticipated and prepared for not only physically but morally. Now there's a word.

Morally? You mean, Arthur, we have to watch the length of our skirts? You simple brakabraks. No. Moral.

What a word. Do you love it or is it just me? Jesus' agonizing in the garden was a moral struggle. The issues of life that are ultimate are moral and we simpletons have not even begun to grasp the moral issues that constitute real life and reality.

We don't see our struggles and our situations as having a moral content and reason and to rob mankind of a moral consciousness is to rob him of his humanity. This is moral. This is ultimate.

This is struggle for things that are invisible, unseen, that offer no prospect of reward but rather you open yourself to be candidates for suffering. In fact, your agonizing in prayer is the suffering. Little wonder that we avoid it.

If your prayer is convenient and easy and glib, forget it. It doesn't reach to heaven. It doesn't transact with God.

He hears agonizing travail. He wants something in the deeps of our being. He wants a commiseration.

He wants a union with the people on earth like himself because you know what? He is still a man of sorrows and grief to this very hour and ever and always will be. It's not over for him. It's his nature.

It's his depth. The only people I've ever seen who recognize that were the sisters of Mary, Basilia Schlink, who wanted to be with Jesus and comfort him and share with him in his present griefs and sorrow. Will that make you ill-fitted to be a nice guy and be popular in your culture? Probably.

They might even have you to see a psychiatrist. How ungainly that nice, healthy New Zealand young people have developed this morbid propensity for sorrow and a sense of grief, seeing the things that are invisible are more effective to them than that which is seen. That's either insanity or ultimate sanity.

So we're told to fight the good fight, fight to the finish, wrestle, which is ultimate conflict, ultimate extension, not only of our bodily strength and skill, but the ultimate issue of who wins in wrestling is beyond the physical dimension and even the element of skill. It's the element of grit. It's the element of what is moral in man who will not allow defeat, who recognizes that the stakes are too great, the issues are too ultimate, that failure can be conceded to the powers of darkness who seem to have all the marbles.

It's that moral element that made Jacob into Israel, who would not let God go except that he blessed him. Now, is that Jewish and you Gentiles are disqualified from that kind of earnest and compelling nature? Or can God encourage you and give it to you by the spirit that you would transcend being limited to being Gentiles, that you would come into this Hebraic, Jacob and Israel urgency by the grace of God because it befits you as the church? And only in that condition can you be the church and fulfill its mandate and its calling. Aren't you glad this is being recorded tonight? Who can understand all this gibberish in the first hearing by a man who's beside himself for your sake? So I wrote here, Jesus had also to contend even against the beauty of the garden, which is so contrary and belies the sea of iniquity, which is the concealed truth of mankind's condition for which he must groan.

So also must we in the bringing forth of an alternative reality to a world that is essentially untroubled and seems to have everything together, all the marbles yet lies in the wicked one. Must we also wrestle against the garden, wrestle against being seduced by the things that purport to be which are not. The victory at Gethsemane must proceed and prepare that of Calvary.

Yet now as then, then even the best of us as disciples sleep. If Jesus had to pass through a Gethsemane, before he passed through Calvary, if he had to pass through Calvary before he would pass through resurrection, if he had to pass through resurrection before he could enter into ascension and enthronement, what then must we? To what degree is he the pattern son? Is this just we can look back historically that this is what he had to experience? Or is his experience, his every experience, something for us as a pattern in some measure incumbent upon us as the body if we are to fulfill and complete the things for which he agonized even unto death at the cross. Why they slept, I don't know, but it's significant that they did.

And Jesus went back again and again until finally he said, take your rest now. The one who has betrayed me is at hand. It's over.

You've missed it. You slept through it. And he went back again and prostrated himself upon the rock and cried out with drops of blood, Father, if this cup could pass.

Nevertheless, not my will, but you think that the father was bored by the repetition? Praying the same thing three times? Where's his originality? Shouldn't he have had more of a charismatic flair and at least express it in a different way each time? Exactly the same. Father, take this cup from me. And I don't think that the father was one whit offended by the repetition.

Well, let me pray. Lord, give me faith to believe for the church of New Zealand, who unlike churches elsewhere in the world, whose environments are not as convivial as yours, gives to you an extra dimension of difficulty and opposition that they don't have to face, namely the beauty of your own environment, the orderliness of your own life. Something has got to happen for which Anglo-Saxon, what's the word, matter-of-factness, propriety, even-keeled, wanting to avoid sorrow or grief has got to be met.

And it's not going to be met, nor does God intend, that its alternative would be the native people here. Yeah, it's not their bombast. It's not that combative thing that God is wanting.

He's condemning both, whether it's passivity, that is Anglo-Saxon and matter-of-fact that likes to be untroubled, or the other that seems to be demanding and compelling and has that accent of belligerency. Either one of those is not the posture of God for the church, but travail, anguish of soul, wrestling out of the deeps, identifying with the Lord, being willing to bear his sense of sorrow and grief for the present condition that yet remains in the earth and will only be finally alleviated by his coming. Can I pray for you? Lord, thank you for the cross, my God, which we thought was only the six hours upon which you were suspended when that terrible shaft fell into its socket.

But evidently the cross had its auspices earlier while you were yet in heaven, before you ever became incarnate, and in fact ever and always was with God, for it in fact is God. Suffering, grief, sorrow, travail, earnestness, moral concern has ever and always been a component of the very nature of God. Or else we're barking up the wrong tree and the deity that we think we're worshiping in his name is one more of our own imagining than who he is in himself.

Lord, may your character infuse your people. Bring to us, Lord, whether it's New Zealand, whether it's Singapore, New York, wherever we are, those essential moral elements that distinguish you and should distinguish your church. A place of understanding that prayer, in the last analysis, real prayer is suffering, is travail, is importuning.

It knows that there's a conflict. It contends and contests. It wrestles.

And that is good for our souls. It saves us from shallowness and being pleasure-oriented and gasping and sighing at the latest fashions and secretly envying them. Lord, bless these young people and your church altogether and bring us into the garden, not to endorse it, but to wrestle against it and against the evil that needs yet to be contended against by an earnest church that is willing for the wrestling, for the exertion, for the strain, for the issues of its life that you give to it and troubled marriages and children and all of the things that are calculated for our depth, our moral growth, our maturity, our reality, and the knowledge of you.

Thank you, Lord, that you sweated great drops of blood. Our atonement did not have to wait for what men punctured you in torture to obtain. You gave it freely and voluntarily.

It extruded out of your own being in the depth of your own travail and passion. And I love that blood, Lord. Let that blood be upon our heads and upon our house, even upon our nation.

We thank and give you praise for going before us, showing us a way. May we embrace it with understanding, depth, willingness, as privilege. Thank you, Lord.

See the travail of your soul and be comforted even by the fruit that is yours tonight because of it. In Jesus' name we pray. God's people said, amen.

The cross honoring church, lifting up by our willingness to bear that remarkable reality because I tell you, as only I can tell you, that you're being fitted for a final collision with Israel in the last days. I'm not talking about the presently existing Jewish community. I'm talking about augmented in great numbers moving through this nation because the Lord had previously indicated that there will not just be a wilderness through New Zealand through which they will pass in the last days dealings of God in their wilderness experience, but the entire nation, unlike that of other places, will itself be totally a wilderness through which Jews will pass in their final extremity.

And if you don't succor them and extend mercy and wipe their wounds and instruct them of why they're suffering and compassionately uphold them while all the world abhors them and they're in flight for their very lives, you will have missed the historic moment. They need to meet a people whose souls are in keeping with the genius of the cross, who show forth the essential nature of the God of Israel, who is a servant Lord and a suffering servant at that. They don't have to see facile New Zealanders who have it all together.

They need to see the revelation of the nature of their own God when it is nowhere more powerfully expressed than when it is expressed through Gentiles who are not Jews by birth. God depict you. You'll not attain to that except through suffering.

You'll not attain to that unless you're willing to allow the Lord to bring to death at the cross those aspects of culture, race, nationality, youth, all the kinds of things that keep us from that immediacy with God by which in communion his nature, his sorrow, and soul is formed in us. It will be a death, painful. Even sentimental

preoccupation with Jews has got to die because ironically it's an impediment to the true affection of God which will not be offended when they come to you offensively.

I hope this is being recorded. Okay. Let's do business with the Lord.

Let's not just hear about the cross. Let's submit to it. Let's welcome it in the unique way that God has an intention for you.

It will not be my experience. It will be your experience at the cross in keeping and in conjunction with your condition, your place, your life, your family, your body, your health, your future. But Jesus voluntarily groaned.

He voluntarily came down from heaven and took upon himself the form of a man and servant unto death. And this must be voluntary also. We're the people of the cross, not as decoration, but in fact we're not his people at all.

Okay. Thank you, Lord. Hear the prayers of your saints, my God, under their breath or audibly, out of their deeps, out of their souls, in a deep moral way, transacting with you, not willing merely to acknowledge the cross, but to participate in its reality, express, make it known, willing for the suffering that the cross signifies that must almost always come to those who stand for God in an inhospitable world, especially in the last days when the conflict will be fierce.

So, Lord, listen. You who have spoken so strangely tonight, come and hear a prayer for which you have long waited. Though we have sung about it, it's a moot question whether we have surrendered to it, to give up our Maori distinction, our Polynesian propensity for a deeper identity that glorifies him.

He gave it to you in order to relinquish it, which is the cross. You pray, saints, right in your seat, right where you are. And you'll be praying more effectually if you pray aloud, because to be heard by others invites death to pride, to self-consciousness, that doesn't mind transacting with God privately and respectfully, but to do it publicly in the hearing of others is an embarrassment for which our New Zealand culture has not prepared us.

It's nothing less, no other, than the cross. Come, saints, act in faith, and talk to God, and tell him, I'm welcoming, Lord, what you're speaking tonight. Whatever form it pleases you to give it, I trust you in that.

You're all wise, you're all merciful, but I'm your body. I want to experience that jolt that came when that cross was set in its socket. I want a permanent dismemberment of my own facile, shallow personality that is okay to get by with people, but it's not okay to glorify you.

I want your deeps, my God. I want an identification with you. I want to share in your sorrows.

I want to be awakened in the night hours, the early morning hours, to prevail for things for which my mind is not even given an understanding. I want to groan for the things that yet need, my God, to be enacted, and the fierce things that will conclude the age. Come, I'm welcoming, Lord, your cross in a new way, in a deep way.

I'm opening myself. I'm trusting you. I don't know what it will mean for my marriage, and what it has meant for my brothers and their marriages who are identified with me.

Whatever form it pleases you to take, you know where the sword of the Lord must go, must penetrate, must pierce, must cut. You know our fleshly and soulish bondings and attachments that compromise and weaken our witness and testimony and make us less than other than what we ought. It's in those very places we're inviting your cross, into the youth culture.

It's fashioned and formed, and that is so delightful for us to contemplate, to embrace, to wear, to put on while we're yet Christians. We can show them. We can be groovy also.

Lord, bring death. Bring the power of the cross to bear in those places from which we cannot free nor extricate ourselves. Vanity, self-interest, pride, sloth.

We're sleeping. We've been sleeping in the garden. We could not watch for an hour.

Not even so much as an hour was too much for us. But we're asking, Lord, come, precious God, bring the reality of the cross to bring death where it's needful that we might know also its power and its life. Thank you, Lord, that when you send your kinsmen into our midst, they're not just going to meet some shallow people who are obliged to be nice.

New Zealand has always been nice, but they've got to see something more. They've got to see the glory of God. They've got to see the nature of their God, the nature of the God of Israel, suffering servant even before he became that, slain, the Lamb of God slain from before the foundations.

He was always in that makeup. Not to be a suffering God is not to be the God who is God. What then must his people be? Save us from comfort, Lord.

Save us from being mollified and pacified and seduced and being concerned for our ease and our security, our retirement, as if these constitute the real issues of life. Come, my God, and show us again we're called into a conflict. Something needs to be contended against fiercely.

Powers of darkness who know their time is short and will tear and rail and need to be met and opposed by a people who know their God and can express the power of the cross because they have come into its reality in their own life and experience. Come on, you saints. Call on the Lord.

Let him know you're willing. Let him bring it. He'll not do it against your will.

It's not for everyone. But when he hears your cry, hears your prayer, sees the intention, how far you're willing to go, I'll tell you, you young ones, it's not long before you'll be 76 also. It's amazing how you think that your youth is going to be permanent, but I can tell you, this life is short and the issues of eternity are long.

Decide rightly and decide now for Jesus' sake. Come to the rock of Gethsemane, the olive press. Let him take another turn and squeeze out and extrude the sap, the true essence on the superficial layers.

My prized place in all Israel is the garden of Gethsemane where the Catholics have put up a gorgeous frescoed, tiled church, but in the midst of it is a rock with an iron grill round about over which I stepped and prostrated myself on that rock where Jesus sweated drops of blood. That rock is available tonight for your prostration, so you wouldn't be excessive even to kneel, let alone to stretch out before the Lord and visualize that you're joining him in that rock, in prostration, in totality, whatsoever his will and desire will require, and you'll not cry out, let this come pass. Come, saints, for New Zealand's sake, for Israel's sake,

for the glory of God's sake.

Transact earnestly beyond your culture, beyond your reticence, beyond your timidity, beyond your self-consciousness. Be his people, stretched out, and agonize and pray and call out of your depths, and you'll not go back to where you were before. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you, my God. That consecrated rock yet remains where you fell and where the great drops of blood fell. Thank you, my God.

Oh, Holy One, the world has done a number on us. They've inducted us into a superficiality, into an artificial thing called reality whose values stink. They have their origin from below.

They divest men of any sense of that which is eternal and real. Come, my God, break the influence and power of that culture that is everywhere about us and visible, seeking always to put its shafts into us and have us to sign up and to be in agreement even in silence. Only the cross, only the power of the cross can break that contending power and loose us to be a people free.

Thank you, my God, in the timeless and eternal realities for which you contended in the garden. Bless these children, Lord. Look upon them prostrate.

We don't know how to praise, Lord. Come, my God, mercy. You know them by name.

You know what their future is. How many are signing, as it were, on the dotted line even now by their prostration and their kneeling? That will be answered by martyrdom, by suffering in the last days. Yes, even in this garden.

So fierce will the contest be. Thank you, my God, that the weak people who kill us and claim they're doing God a service who cannot be mollified. We can't answer them.

We have only to suffer and to bear their vitriolic anger and bitterness that will not be placated except by our death. Lord, to speak like that now and pray like that now is not imaginative. In the age of the rise of Islam in every nation and knowing its vitriolic hatred against the Jew and against the church, it's such a satanic character that will not be placated except by our blood.

We know there'll be a fierce contest, and we don't want them that day to quibble, to prevail, to be concerned for our bodily life because the issue was resolved long before. We gave it to you at Calvary. We gave it to you at Gethsemane.

And whatever form it takes by which our own life is to conclude, we entrust that with you. Thank you, my God. Thank you, Lord, privileged to share not only in your sorrows and griefs, but in your sufferings.

There's yet a suffering that remains. We'd be naive to disown that, and we won't allow New Zealand to persuade us otherwise. We see the things that are invisible, eternal, and real, and to those things we bow and subscribe and say, yes, Lord, for this we were called.

Come and refurbish our life and do a job on our interior that we would be aligned with you in our inmost being and all that is subsumed and understood by the cross, that shameful symbol of suffering and death reserved only for criminals whom the world despises. Thank you, Lord. Thank you, my God.

Strip this facetious Christianity of all of its outward things, my God. Pull the plug from the amplifier if that's what it's going to take. Strip it, my God, of its modern-day accoutrements and its reflection of the world, its techniques, and its methodologies, and its whole psychic, its whole mentality as if pleasure and enjoyment is the purpose for all being.

Thank you, Lord. Come and have a people for your name, apostolic, prophetic, who understand and count themselves privileged to share in that measure of things, my God, that are ordained by which you shall be eternally glorified as king. Come, saints.

Transact tonight. Make it clear how far you want to go. Don't withhold.

Give Him your life. Give Him your future. Give Him your career.

Give Him your ministry. Die to it, the subtlety of ambition that insinuates itself even in valid things like ministry, the subtlety of soul that wants to be seen of men and recognized and applauded that compromises us and keeps us from Levitical priestly dedication. The cross is God's provision against all these subtleties of soul by which we have been made captive.

Come and receive its power in the willingness to receive its death that you might express its glory and light in Yeshua's holy name.

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